

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Status

Claims 1 - 18 are currently in the application. Independent claims 1 and 10 are currently amended to include previously presented dependent claims 19 and 20. No new matter is added.

\$112 Rejection

The objections to the claims have been addressed in the amendments of the claims. In amended claims 1 and 10, the relation of the spreading means to the de-registering means is described as being 'upstream.' Applicant thanks the Examiner for the suggestion.

\$102 Rejection

The \$102 rejections are moot in view of the amendments to independent claims 1 and 10.

\$103 Rejection

The \$103 rejections set forth in the Final Office Action in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 are moot in view of amendments to independent claims 1 and 10.

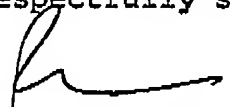
The rejection set forth in paragraph 10 is traversed by the amendments to independent claims 1 and 10. Both Harris and Hawkins disclose processes and devices for opening and treating crimped tow which is to be formed into tobacco smoke filter rods and make no mention of forming an absorbent composite adapted for use in a disposable absorbent garment as in the instant application. Accordingly, the rejection based on Harris in view of Hawkins fails to suggest the instant invention, i.e., forming an absorbent composite adapted for use in a disposable absorbent garment. Thus, this rejection must be removed.

Accordingly, the instant invention patentably distinguishes the prior art.

#### Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests an early Notice of Allowance in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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